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18 April 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT : Some Thoughts on Imagery Analysis and DDI
Reorganization

1. I have pulled together these thoughts on imagery analysis in the Intelligence Directorate for your consideration during the current reorganization study. While they are my personal views, formulated during only six months on this job, they reflect a synthesis of numerous papers read, briefings heard, and discussions held on the general subject. They also reflect no little contemplation on my part. Although I must confess to the likelihood of some bias resulting from my current responsibilities, the views are honestly held, and hopefully bear the stamp of a relatively fresh outlook.

2. First, detailed imagery analysis--as performed by IAS--must be viewed as an integral part of the intelligence production process. The bulk of our work is done in direct response to the production offices, to meet the specific requirements of their research and analytical activities. In this respect, it differs markedly from the general support function performed--or which ought to be performed--by the NPIC. Any restructuring of the Directorate should sharpen this functional distinction. The Intelligence Directorate has a legitimate and essential need to control a direct support operation of the sort performed by IAS. The rationale is much stronger for this than for controlling a general, community-wide support operation such as NPIC's.

3. As a corollary to this, CIA's direct imagery analysis support capability should remain separate from the national support function. The benefits derived from separate management of these functions have been amply demonstrated in terms of IAS's ability to respond in a timely--and directly relevant--fashion to CIA's special needs. Any savings in terms of personnel spaces from a recombining of IAS and NPIC would be relatively small. IAS has little in the way of management and support overhead, and NPIC would have to absorb at least some of these elements if required to integrate IAS's functions. Moreover, any small economies gained by an amalgamation would be offset to a large

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extent by the relative inefficiency and bureaucratic inconvenience of tasking a national-level entity with responsibility for direct support of one of its consumers--CIA. This problem would be compounded if NPIC's role were to be expanded to provide direct support to DIA as well, which might logically be proposed.

4. The case for retaining IAS within the Intelligence Directorate would be strengthened if FMSAC and OSI were integrated into that Directorate. Last year, support of those two DDS&T production offices amounted to 20 percent of our workload. Had they been components of the DDI, more than 90 percent of our workload would have been expended in support of the single directorate (including the 12 percent we expended on our own account). The only work we do apart from that amounts to 4 percent for COMIREX (fulfilling our basic reporting responsibilities under the National Tasking Plan, but which is basically to support OER), 3 percent for the DDO, and one percent for the DCI (SAVA, etc.).

5. The Intelligence Directorate's imagery analysis capability should be a centralized, single entity, and not parcelled out among the production offices. There are obvious economies to be realized in a centralized operation supporting the directorate as a whole, such as in film distribution, efficient utilization of personnel resources, equipment maintenance, etc. More importantly, there are real benefits in a professional sense from having a centralized grouping of imagery analysts working in proximity to each other, sharing experiences and techniques, and having broad career opportunities within a centralized service. This arrangement shouldn't preclude rotational assignments or transfers between the service and the production offices. But maintaining imagery analysis as a separate discipline makes sense from the standpoint of the specialized training and continuity of assignments needed to develop the detailed expertise which has been the hallmark of IAS's success over the years. If the principle of a centralized imagery analysis operation is accepted, then even OBGI's small photo interpretation capability might well be transferred to IAS. It's work could be performed as well from IAS as from within OBGI.

6. Direct imagery analysis support of the production offices does not require the existence of the IRS mechanism. Although we now receive formal requirements through IRS, in most instances we renegotiate these directly with the originator. This direct, bilateral negotiation process is essential to ensure that the project is feasible,

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that the requirement is clear, and that our response is pertinent to the real needs of the requestor. It also ensures optimum utilization of our resources. The IRS operation seems more pertinent to intelligence collection problems than to controlling the needs of the production offices for direct analytical support. We would propose that requests for detailed imagery analysis support be handled directly between IAS and the production offices, and not be funneled through IRS. This might permit some reduction in the size of that mechanism and realignment of its responsibilities.

7. It may be desirable to have IAS take on the role of coordinating imagery collection and exploitation requirements within the Directorate. As the entity closest to the imagery problem, it would make sense to give IAS these technical responsibilities on behalf of the Directorate. As things now stand, we are only peripherally involved in these matters, despite our considerable stake in them. We are not represented in most COMIREX entities, and have small voice in their deliberation. In general, we have felt that the bureaucratic requirements "tail" wags the production and exploitation "dog". If the COMIREX function were transferred to the IC Staff (see below), and if IRS's function were streamlined and realigned, it would be rational to task IAS with the residual Intelligence Directorate roles in these areas. Given clear guidelines and responsibilities, I have no doubt IAS could perform these roles effectively.

8. On a higher level, we would suggest some rethinking of the USIB-level coordination of requirements and exploitation. The COMIREX machinery is large and cumbersome, essentially because of its character as a "committee" composed of representatives of different constituencies. This function might more efficiently be performed by the IC Staff on behalf of the DCI, and its operation reviewed by USIB. (The same approach might profitably be taken with respect to other USIB committees.) Such an arrangement would make these functions more directly responsive to the community's needs--as seen by the DCI and his staff--and give him more effective control of the utilization of resources. It would tend to eliminate bureaucratic jockeying and reduce the tendency toward "compromise" decisions which are wasteful of resources.

9. If the IC Staff took on responsibilities for managing community resources, it would seem appropriate to consider placing NPIC also under its direct control. As an entity having responsibilities for support of the intelligence community at large, NPIC clearly has national,

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rather than single-agency, functions. If these functions were more clearly drawn than they now are, such a move would be even more rational. Such a sharpening of its role seems likely with the advent of the oncoming new system. This distinction would be made even clearer if the bulk of NPIC's basic reporting responsibilities under the National Tasking Plan were transferred to departmental imagery analysis activities. NPIC would then be responsible primarily for supporting the entire community with 1st and 2nd phase photo interpretation of nationally directed imagery collection programs, and of maintaining a national imagery data base. Its products would have the status of raw information, and would be subject to the same dissemination controls and caveats as unprocessed information from other sources such as NSA. NPIC would retain other community support functions such as equipment R&D, computer and mensuration support, and housekeeping functions. I believe this would serve the interests of the community in general, of both DIA and CIA in particular, and of the Intelligence Directorate as well.

10. I realize that there is much more to be said--and more constituencies to be heard from--on these matters. But, assuming the objectives of the reorganization which you outlined last week are still relevant, i.e. rationalizing the directorate to meet the needs of the consumers, and meeting those needs efficiently, then I commend these thoughts to your consideration. I trust I haven't complicated your thought processes too much. I stand ready to amplify or clarify these thoughts at your request.



GEORGE W. ALLEN
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